AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-22. (Canceled)

23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 43, wherein ~~the step of~~ degrading the image comprises reducing the size of the image.

24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 43, wherein ~~the step of~~ degrading the image comprises decreasing resolution of the image.

25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 43, wherein ~~the step of~~ determining whether the user is ~~active or~~ inactive further comprises determining whether a certain period of time has elapsed.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25, wherein ~~said~~ the certain period of time begins when the image was last refreshed.

27. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 25, wherein ~~said~~ the certain period of time begins when the image was last sent to the user's system.

28-29. (Canceled)

30. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 43, wherein ~~the step of~~ determining whether the user is ~~active or~~ inactive further comprises determining whether the user is using the user's system.

31. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 43, wherein ~~the step of~~ determining whether the user is ~~active or~~ inactive further comprises determining whether a screen saver has been activated on the user's system.

32. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 43, wherein ~~the step of~~ determining whether the user is active or inactive is performed periodically.

33. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 43, further comprising:
increasing the quality of the degraded image to produce a less-degraded image upon a determination that the user is active; and
sending ~~said~~ <u>the</u> less-degraded image to the user's system.

34. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 43, wherein ~~the step of~~ refreshing the image is performed more frequently than ~~the step of~~ determining whether to degrade the image.

35. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 43, wherein ~~the step of~~ determining whether to degrade the image occurs substantially concurrently with a refresh cycle.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the degraded image is sent to the user's system upon refresh.

37. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 43, further comprising:

receiving a request from the user to increase the quality of the degraded image;

increasing the quality of the degraded image to produce a less-degraded image in response to ~~said~~ the received request; and

sending ~~said~~ the less-degraded image to the user's system

38. (Canceled)

39. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 43, wherein ~~the step of~~ determining whether to degrade the image further comprises determining whether a certain period of time has elapsed, wherein ~~said~~ the certain period of time begins upon a determination that the user is inactive.

40. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 39, further comprising:

increasing the quality of the degraded image to produce a less-degraded image upon a determination that the user is active; and

sending ~~said~~ <u>the</u> less-degraded image to the user's system.

41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the network is the Internet.

42. (Canceled)

43. (Currently Amended) A method for displaying an image from a camera on a user's system, the method comprising, at a site remote from the user's system:

sending the image to the user's system via a network;

refreshing the image periodically;

~~determining whether to degrade the image, the step of determining whether to degrade the image comprising~~ determining whether the user is ~~active or~~ inactive, ~~wherein the step of determining whether~~ the user ~~is active or~~ <u>being</u> inactive ~~comprises determining whether a window displaying the image is fully visible to the user, wherein the act of determining whether a window displaying the image is fully visible to the user comprises determining whether at least a portion of~~ <u>when a window containing</u> the image is visually obstructed <u>on the user's system</u>;

adjusting image parameters <u>over a period of time</u> to produce a degraded image in response to a determination that ~~said~~ <u>the</u> user is inactive<u>, the degradation of the image increasing exponentially over the period of time to achieve a fully degraded image</u>; and

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periodically sending the degraded image, during the period of time, to the user's
system via the network.

44-45. (Canceled)

46. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 43, ~~wherein the step of~~
~~determining whether the user is active or inactive~~ further ~~comprises~~ comprising
determining whether the user has provided any input into the user's system.

47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the image is
captured at a first location, wherein the user is located at a second location, wherein the
first location is remote from the second location, wherein the user's system is configured
to display the image.

48. (Canceled)

49. (Currently Amended) A method for displaying an image from a camera on a
user's system, the method comprising:

at the user's system, receiving the image on the user's system via a network;

at a site remote from the user's system, refreshing the image periodically;

at the site remote from the user's system, ~~determining whether to degrade the~~
~~image, the step of determining whether to degrade the image comprising~~ determining
whether the user is ~~active or~~ inactive, ~~wherein the step of determining whether the user~~

is active or inactive comprises determining whether a window displaying the image is fully visible to the user, wherein the act of determining whether a window displaying the image is fully visible to the user comprises determining whether at least a portion of the user being determined inactive when a window containing the image is visually obstructed on the user's system;

at the site remote from the user's system, adjusting image parameters over a period of time to produce a degraded image in response to a determination that said the user is inactive, the degradation of the image increasing exponentially over the period of time to achieve a fully degraded image; and

at the user's system, periodically receiving the degraded image, during the period of time, on the user's system via the network.

50. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium storing instruction which, when executed by a processor, performs a method for displaying an image from a camera on a user's system, the method of comprising:

at the user's system, receiving the image on the user's system via a network;

at a site remote from the user's system, refreshing the image periodically;

at the site remote from the user's system, determining whether to degrade the image, the step of determining whether to degrade the image comprising determining whether the user is active or inactive, wherein the step of determining whether the user is active or inactive comprises determining whether a window displaying the image is fully visible to the user, wherein the act of determining whether a window displaying the image is fully visible to the user comprises determining whether at least a portion of the

user being determined inactive when a window containing the image is visually
obstructed on the user's system;

at the site remote from the user's system, adjusting image parameters over a
period of time to produce a degraded image in response to a determination that said the
user is inactive, the degradation of the image increasing exponentially over the period of
time to achieve a fully degraded image; and

at the user's system, periodically receiving the degraded image, during the period
of time, on the user's system via the network.

51. (Currently Amended) A method for displaying an image from a camera on a
user's system, the method comprising:

sending the image to the user's system via a network;

periodically transmitting image refresh content to the user's system;

determining whether a window at the user's system that displays the image is
visually obstructed by other content being displayed at the user's system;

if the window is determined to be visually obstructed, transmitting subsequent
image refresh content to the user's system, wherein the subsequent image refresh
content is degraded with respect to the image refresh content that was sent prior to the
determination by adjusting image parameters controlling degradation of the image
refresh content over a period of time, the degradation of the image refresh content
increasing exponentially over the period of time.

52. (Currently Amended) A method for displaying an image from a camera on a user's system, the method comprising:

receiving the image on the user's system via a network;

periodically receiving image refresh content on the user's system;

determining whether a window on the user's system that displays the image is visually obstructed by other content being displayed at the user's system;

if the window is determined to be visually obstructed, receiving subsequent image refresh content on the user's system, wherein the subsequent image refresh content is degraded with respect to the image refresh content that was received prior to the determination by adjusting image parameters controlling degradation of the image refresh content over a period of time, the degradation of the image refresh content increasing exponentially over the period of time.